

Threatening Behaviour

Campus Security Services Emergency Number: 721-7599

GUIDELINES IN THE EVENT OF THREATENING BEHAVIOUR

(from Campus Security Services Brochure #6)

Be alert and assess the threat

There is no set technique for dealing with highly agitated or potentially hostile people. Everyone in the scenario reacts differently to the situation. Anger can be a prelude to violence.

To ignore the anger of an individual is to ignore the threat to personal safety.

Notify your supervisor of any threatening behaviour. When obvious signs of anger are not evident (shouting, swearing, threats, etc.) then staff should be alert to subtle signs including:

- rapid respiration
- pupils dilated
- fixed stare
- bunching up of the body
- white knuckle effect
- voice or complexion change

Dealing with difficult individuals

Never argue with an individual. Empathy will go a long way towards ensuring your safety. As well, it might buy you some time.

Here are some tips which may assist you when dealing with difficult individuals:

- Don't make appointments at the end of the day or week with individuals known to be difficult.
- Keep your desk top clear of any objects which might be used as a weapon.
- Have two staff members interview a known difficult person.
- Keep the door to the interview room open.
- Don't "box yourself in" in an office with a difficult person.
- Keep a solid object between you and the individual (such as your desk).
- Give yourself the option of leaving.
- Good interpersonal skills may save the day

Planning ahead

Arranging an office emergency alert system can provide you with assistance if required.

Learn the "yes or no" technique. This is simply a system whereby your co-workers telephone you asking questions that can be answered yes or no. Some examples are:

Q. Are you okay?

A. Yes!

Q. Do you want another staff member to attend your office?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you want us to call Campus Security Services?

A. Yes.

Q. Should I call back in a couple of minutes?

A. No.

Life-threatening behaviour

If you observe or are the subject of life-threatening behaviour:

1.If you are able to leave the area or building without endangering your own safety, leave by the closest exit, go to the nearest phone and call 911 and then Campus Security at 721-7599.

2.State clearly that you need immediate assistance. Give your name, location, the nature of the threat and the people or area it involves.

3.If you are unable to leave the scene or building without endangering your own safety, go to the nearest unused office, lock and barricade the door and phone 911 and then Campus Security Services at 7599 (follow phone procedures outlined in para. #1). Remain in the room until given the all clear by a person in authority or you are sure the danger has passed.

4.Upon notification, Campus Security will immediately attend the scene. Campus Security will assist the police, as required, in removing the threatening individual from the scene.

5.Campus Security shall contact the President's Office and Public Relations and Information Services, provide information about the situation and check with the following departments, where appropriate, if the individual's status is unclear:

- Departmenty/Faculty
- Registrar's Office
- Human Resources/Vice President Academic and Provost's Office
- Housing and Conference Services
- UVSS Daycare Services
- Equity Issues
- Health Services

Non-life-threatening behaviour

If you observe or are the subject of threatening behaviour which is not life threatening:

1. Notify Campus Security immediately at 721-7599. If you are not in immediate danger, don't hang up until told to do so. State clearly that you need immediate assistance. Give your name, location, the nature of the threat and the people or area it involves.

2. If you are alone and feel at risk, try to leave the scene and notify Campus Security from another location. Never try to handle a dangerous or unpredictable situation on your own, ask your supervisor or co-worker to assist you.

3. If you feel comfortable remaining on the scene until Campus Security arrives, remain calm and acknowledge the individual's anger and frustration. Assure the individual that you will get someone to help.

4. Upon notification, Campus Security will immediately attend the scene and intervene.

5. Where warranted, Campus Security shall remove the individual from the scene and call on the assistance of the appropriate services (such as the Police) as necessary.